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ABSTRACT

This report addresses the proposition that higher education must provide more international content, and that the United States, at present, is ill-prepared for the changes in business, manufacturing, diplomacy, science, and technology that have come with an intensely interdependent world. Five major recommendations are presented and discussed: (1) by the year 2000, 10 percent of American college and university students should have a significant educational experience abroad during their undergraduate years; (2) as numbers and opportunities are expanded, it is urged that greater diversity in participating students, in foreign locations, and in types of programs be a major goal; (3) the study abroad experience must be integrated into regular degree programs in many different fields including professional schools; (4) a variety of factors (e.g., lack of institutional commitment, language deficiencies, lack of support services) inhibit expansion of numbers and diversity in undergraduate education abroad and should be vigorously addressed; (5) expanded funding from both private and public sources will be essential if the academic community is to diversify the types of institutions, students, and experiences involved in study abroad in the years ahead. Appendices list task force members and related organizations. Contains 16 references. (GLR)

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A National Mandate for Education Abroad:

Getting on with the Task

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Report of the
National Task Force on
Undergraduate Education Abroad
May 1990

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction: Task Force Purpose and Focus

Summary of Recommendations

Chapters

- I. Recommendation 1: Expand Education Abroad
- II. Recommendation 2: Increase Diversity
- III. Recommendation 3: Develop Program Approaches
- IV. Recommendation 4: Attack Major Inhibitors
- V. Recommendation 5: Address Financial Options
- VI. Towards Action

References

Appendices

INTRODUCTION

The role of the United States as a leader among nations is changing rapidly. Despite our position of international leadership for almost fifty years, we are ill-prepared for the changes in business, manufacturing, diplomacy, science and technology that have come with an intensely interdependent world. Effectiveness in such a world requires a citizenry whose knowledge is sufficiently international in scope to cope with global interdependence.¹

Task Force Purpose and Focus

At the very moment when dramatic changes in the world cause our nation to re-evaluate priorities and to search for policies and alignments which will serve our people in the new century, our position of international leadership among nations is rapidly shifting. The extraordinary events of 1989 rank as markers of human history comparable to those of 1848, 1914 and 1945. Without warning, the comfortable dimensions of the present convulsed and the world transformed itself in unimagined ways. Many of the goals of more than forty years of American foreign policy were realized in a matter of months. The United States, the Soviet Union, Europe, indeed the entire world, grapple with fundamental role changes as we all enter this new period in history, one that is full of possibility and hope.

Yet, in the United States, optimism about this new world is tempered by anxiety created not only by uncertainty about events still to unfold but also by our ability to rise to these new challenges. There is abundant evidence that our citizens are not well prepared for the international realities ahead. By any measure, whether it be comparisons of foreign language proficiency, tests of geographic literacy, or availability of specialists to advise government or business regarding Eastern Europe or other distant but important parts of the world, the level of international knowledge and understanding in our country is wanting. In comparison with others, we as a people are poorly educated to deal with the political, economic and social issues which we will face in a new global era that will not measure strength primarily in terms of military preparedness.

In fact, for the past several years, there has been growing acknowledgement that education must provide more international content and lead to greater sensitivity and understanding. For undergraduates at our universities and colleges, a serious educational experience in another country brings cross-cultural understanding and international learning not achievable through almost any

¹ Advisory Council for International Educational Exchange, Educating for Global Competence, p.1.

other approach. Opportunities for such experience abroad are still confined to a small fraction of American undergraduates, mainly upper middle class, and still focus predominantly on Western Europe and on study of the humanities and social sciences. Study abroad opportunities largely neglect the rest of the world and internationally important professional fields. At a time when American citizens and professionals in most fields require much more international knowledge, the narrow scope of undergraduate education abroad constitutes a grave neglect of extremely important needs and limits opportunities to a select few.

It was to address this situation that the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA) invited the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE), and the Institute of International Education (IIE) to join it in forming the National Task Force on Undergraduate Education Abroad. The Task Force was established in June 1989 and adopted the following mandate:

- To make undergraduate study and other academically related experiences abroad a higher national priority, with particular reference to such specific needs as increasing financial support, greater diversity of opportunity and program participation, and the assurance of program quality.
- To initiate and introduce language in existing legislation that will facilitate and expand undergraduate study abroad, develop new legislation at the state and federal levels, and explore and support non-legislative/governmental avenues of funding.
- To develop an action agenda for the exchange field and the broader higher education community and involve these constituencies in the advocacy and implementation of the Task Force's recommendations.

Crucial to the work of the Task Force were the accomplishments of the "Bartlett Committee," a nationally distinguished group appointed by CIEE and named for its chair, Thomas A. Bartlett, to review and make recommendations on future priorities for study abroad. We, the members of the Task Force, fully support the priorities set forth by that committee in its 1988 report, Educating for Global Competence, and have defined as our own agenda advocating and facilitating their implementation. Chief among them are: a major expansion of undergraduate education abroad, greatly increased access for minority and other under-represented students, and correction of the grossly disproportionate involvement of Western European program sites compared to all the rest of the world.

Although the Task Force² expects to function actively for only a year, making undergraduate education abroad a higher national priority will require the ongoing support of many. Crucial to this effort will be the follow-up activities of the sponsoring organizations: CIEE, IIE, and NAFSA as well as others involved in the process. If such efforts are catalyzed by the Task Force and some progress achieved before its work is done, the substantial commitment of our sponsors will have been well justified.

The establishment of the National Task Force reflects and should strengthen the mounting awareness that study abroad is one of the most effective means to achieve international education for undergraduates and the internationalization of colleges and universities. Although in the past undergraduate study abroad may have in some instances been deficient in academic substance

² The Task Force members are listed in Appendix A. Contributing to our work have been five "resource persons" plus the representatives of organizations and associations invited to serve in a "sounding board" capacity--see Appendix B.

and lacked institutional and national support, its importance is now beginning to be more widely recognized in the United States. Some recent events and trends reinforce this development.

In reaching its conclusions the Task Force benefitted and drew on a large number of recent studies and reports which have targeted the need to strengthen international education and exchange. Our primary inspiration came from the earlier mentioned CIEE report, Educating for Global Competence. The more significant recent studies and reports which represent the mounting awareness of the value of an international educational experience are listed in the reference section.

One of these studies, however, should be mentioned here because of its findings on the results of study abroad. A five-country, five-year study³, for which the U.S. report will be published in summer 1990, compellingly documents the major impacts of study abroad in terms of students' international learning, interests, and career aims: the U.S. students substantially increased foreign language proficiency; after their sojourn abroad their knowledge of their host country increased dramatically, as did their interest in and knowledge of international affairs; a majority of the American study abroad returnees planned on careers that would benefit from the knowledge and perspectives gained from their period abroad.

An additional and important point of further reference for the Task Force was its understanding of the impressive educational goals of ERASMUS⁴, the European Community program aimed at ensuring that by 1992, ten percent of EC university students can afford and will have a significant study abroad experience in another EC country. ERASMUS will prepare European students not only for the professional, commercial, technical, linguistic, academic, and diplomatic needs of a united Europe, but also for performing effectively in the world market of ideas and trade. According to the most recent data available⁵, hardly two percent of American undergraduates study abroad for academic credit, a percentage far below the ERASMUS goal of ten percent by 1992. In the view of the Task Force, American higher education must also vigorously meet this latter challenge.

The Task Force Focus. While focussing on the undergraduate level, the Task Force explicitly recognizes the importance of opportunities for study and other experiences abroad at all levels of American education, from secondary school to graduate school and post graduate research; for students, teachers, and scholars. But we believe that it is the internationalization of the undergraduate experience which can have the greatest impact on American society in terms of life long interests and values. Moreover, while the main emphasis of this report concerns formal study abroad programming organized and overseen by colleges and universities or by consortia of higher education institutions, the Task Force is convinced that international work or service experiences, as well as other forms of immersion in the daily life of a foreign culture, can contribute greatly to a student's formal academic and/or pre-professional education and understanding of the world, even if this educational gain is not measured in terms of academic credit.

³ Carlson, Burn, Useem, Yachimowicz, Study Abroad: The Experience of American Undergraduates.

⁴ European Regional Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students

⁵ M. Zikopoulos, ed., Open Doors 1988-89: Report on International Educational Exchange.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The work of the Task Force has resulted in five major recommendations. Each recommendation is treated in more detail in one of the following five chapters, and they are presented here in summary form. Taken together, they will greatly enhance the contribution of overseas study abroad programs to the internationalization of the higher education experience of undergraduates.

Expansion of Education Abroad. By the year 2000, ten percent of American college and university students should have a significant educational experience abroad during their undergraduate years. Achieving this will require substantial growth in the number and type of opportunities provided and a more pervasive integration of education abroad into institutional strategies aimed at strengthening the international dimension in U.S. higher education.

Increased Diversity. As numbers and opportunities are expanded we urge that greater diversity be a major goal for all aspects of education abroad: greater diversity in participating students, in foreign locations, and in types of programs.

Curricular Connections. The study abroad experience must be integrated into regular degree programs in many different fields including professional schools. In some fields, study abroad should become a requirement, for example, for future foreign language teachers in elementary and secondary schools.

Major Inhibitors. A variety of factors inhibit expansion of numbers and diversity in undergraduate education abroad. Some are historical; others are tied to negative perceptions. We urge that all be vigorously addressed. They include:

- Insufficient institutional commitment to international education.
- Negative views of some faculty members.
- Restrictive curricular requirements.
- Foreign language deficiencies.
- Inadequate study abroad support services on campus and abroad.
- Inadequate information about education abroad opportunities and their relative quality.
- Financial regulations and shortfalls.

Financial Options. While lack of money is not always the main obstacle to program development or student participation, expanded funding from both private and public sources will be essential if the academic community is to diversify the types of institutions, students, and experiences involved in study abroad in the years ahead.

CHAPTER I

Expansion of Education Abroad

In order to enhance the impact of study abroad on the internationalization of U.S. colleges and universities, the goals set forth in Educating for Global Competence must be implemented. Chief among them is: participation in study abroad by ten percent of all undergraduates by 1995, and, for the longer term, twenty to twenty-five percent by the year 2008, two decades after the CIEE committee completed its report. The rationale for these goals merits repeating:

"It is absolutely essential that college students cultivate an informed and sensitive awareness of those parts of the world in which more than half the global population lives...

...The intensely interdependent nature of the world community and the challenges to American competitiveness mean that we need to increase the competence of students in their knowledge of other countries and their abilities with foreign languages."

An educational experience in a foreign setting certainly contributes significantly to this increased knowledge and competency, and yet, according to IIE figures, the number of students receiving credit for studying abroad in 1987-88 was only 62,341. Although this figure omits data from some non-responding institutions, it nevertheless documents that only a tiny fraction of America's more than 12.5 million college and university students have a study abroad experience.

The expansion of education abroad is urgent for the following reasons:

- The impact of study abroad is far greater if substantial numbers of students rather than the occasional few participate. Only then does the experience produce important multiplier effects on home campus curricula and teaching and on students' academic and personal goals and achievements.
- Americans must, like their European and Japanese student counterparts, learn to function professionally across national boundaries. The United States cannot afford to lag in preparing future professionals for the internationally involved careers that await them.

The National Task Force strongly urges American colleges and universities to integrate study abroad into their institutional strategies for strengthening not only international education but also the quality of their overall academic programs. Study and other educational experiences abroad, as part of the internationalization of undergraduates programs, should play a much more central role in what colleges and universities are all about: in their missions and goals, in their institutional structures and policies, in their educational programming and planning, and in their allocations of staff and other resources.

CHAPTER II

Increasing Diversity

Ensuring that at least ten percent of U.S. students have an educational experience abroad requires more than mere linear increases in what now exists. Recruiting more undergraduates must involve a wider spectrum of students studying in a wider range of geographic destinations and new and different program models.

Geographic Locations. The overwhelming dominance of Western Europe in U.S. study abroad programming, while historically understandable, is no longer compatible with the nation's needs in international education. To function as citizens and professionals in a shrinking world, American students should learn about all of it, not just the Anglo-European countries. At the same time it must be recognized that study abroad in many countries and regions outside of Western Europe can present American students with a variety of difficult challenges: unfamiliarity with the host country's culture and language/s; enormous competition among host country students a limited number of places in higher education; major differences in accommodations, student services; different approaches to teaching and learning; smaller library and fewer academic facilities; and unfamiliar student social interaction. These kinds of differences make it especially important to revise program models for study abroad and to develop new ones, especially for Third World country sites.

The National Task Force urges as a short-term target that undergraduate study outside of Western Europe be expanded to at least one-third of all study abroad students. At present more American undergraduates study in the United Kingdom alone than the total of all in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. To reach this new goal, these major world regions must see a doubling of American undergraduates pursuing education abroad.

Minority Student Participation. Efforts to expand the number of undergraduates who study abroad must address the lack of diversity among them. Traditionally American study abroad students have come from affluent, middle or upper class, white, professional families rather than from the broad spectrum of American society. Even though minority enrollments in American colleges and universities have increased overall by eight percent in 1984-86, and in 1986 represented ten percent of all four-year college students, minority participation in study abroad has increased little, representing only a tiny fraction of all undergraduate study abroad students.

Because, as stated in Educating for Global Competence, "it is clearly in the national interest to have internationally skilled students from the widest possible range of backgrounds," recruiting the under-represented minorities, especially Blacks and Hispanics, to study abroad calls for special measures, not least of which may be special funding.

CHAPTER III

Developing Program Approaches

Forging Curricular Connections. The existence of few or no connections between home campus curricula and what students study abroad is an important deterrent to study abroad for American students.⁶ Students that do not study abroad give as reasons their perception that it did not fit with or was not required by their major, might prolong their degree period, and was not encouraged or was even explicitly discouraged by their faculty advisers.

Study abroad can enroll substantially more undergraduates only if it is clear that their studies abroad will both earn them academic credit and will be treated as an integral part of their degree program and an asset to it. In particular, a study abroad period should be treated as part of, rather than apart from, their studies for their major. It is ironic that in the United States where the academic credit system facilitates the recognition of studies done elsewhere, students in many disciplines find this difficult or impossible with respect to requirements for their major. In Western Europe, even with only an incipient system of academic credit, ERASMUS enables many EC students who study in another EC country to have their work treated as an integral part of their home campus degree.

In order to strengthen study abroad's connections with home campus curricula, the following steps are needed:

- Students should have greater access to information on study abroad opportunities, including specific courses, in order to plan their study abroad far enough in advance so that it can be incorporated into and not extend their degree period.
- American faculty members and undergraduate advisers should have sufficient information on courses their students wish to take abroad to counsel them on courses that will count towards the degree and to encourage them to study abroad.
- To integrate study abroad more closely into home campus curricula and reduce the sense of alienation many returnees experience on returning to campus, faculty should attempt to build on students' international learning, developing or modifying courses in which such students tend to enroll.
- Colleges and universities should encourage an academically related experience abroad as an option in all degree programs.

Subjects Throughout the Curriculum. If more students are to have educational experiences abroad, program opportunities must become much more varied in subject or discipline focus. Rather than being primarily in humanities and social sciences fields, education abroad opportunities must be targeted across disciplines. Obvious fields are public health, education (including practice teaching abroad), architecture, environmental studies, and hotel and travel administration, but business and

⁶ Carlson, et. al., Study Abroad: The Experience of American Undergraduates.

engineering, because of their large enrollments and the rapid internationalization of careers in these fields, must also be priorities.

Major constraints to including study abroad in such fields as engineering and business are the tight curricular requirements, including sequencing, which leave little flexibility for students. The Task Force believes, however, that early and careful planning should, given faculty encouragement, enable more of these students to study abroad. The fact that some professional schools in the United States not only make it possible but encourage their majors to study abroad suggests that this is indeed a realistic goal.

New Models. In expanding study abroad to encompass ten percent of all undergraduates and diversify both participants and destinations, merely replicating and multiplying current program models is unrealistic and inappropriate. For students who are older, of minority background, employed (46.5 percent of full-time students under 25 years are employed at least part-time), are disabled, or have limited funds, study abroad often is not perceived to be an option. The needs of such students are mostly ignored by the more typical study abroad models and structures. The Task Force cannot prescribe the new models for greatly expanded and diversified education abroad. These must be developed pragmatically by individual institutions, consortia, or other appropriate organizations. However, features to consider include more short-term stays, flexible language requirements, "no-fee swapping" of students between U.S. and foreign institutions, and built-in student work or service components that reduce costs.

An important model for diversifying education abroad is work experience in another country which puts students in close contact with the local people and culture. Undergraduate student interest in work experiences abroad is increasing rapidly and certainly at a faster rate than study abroad program participation. Nevertheless, little interest in support for these students has been shown by much of the international education and academic communities, who confine their attention to academic programs and may wrongly dismiss experiential learning as of little educational value. Internships, various types of cooperative education arrangements, voluntary service and independent study/research projects are among approaches which could either generate academic credit or be academically or professionally relevant to degree programs at the home institution.

For students preferring to work abroad rather than pursue formal courses, whether for reasons of finance or other motivation, the many opportunities now available, for example through CIEE and the various other organizations which facilitate work abroad, should be brought to students' attention, and be further expanded. Other possible models would be service in an undergraduate Peace Corps, working as undergraduate teaching assistants in schools or colleges abroad, or participating in workcamps and other kinds of volunteer activities.

CHAPTER IV

Attacking Major Inhibitors

The Task Force identified seven factors which stand in the way of expansion of and improved quality in undergraduate study abroad. While there is some overlap among them, each impediment is sufficiently separate from the others to call for a different treatment and strategy, either at the institutional level or more broadly. They must be addressed.

First, the lack of institutional commitment to a strong international dimension in undergraduate education is a serious impediment at some colleges and universities. Without such a commitment--that is, a determination to adjust and tune undergraduate learning to the multi-cultural and global realities of the decade ahead--there will be little institutional encouragement for students to study abroad and for faculty members to organize new programs.

National associations and organizations are helping to build commitment, reinforced by an impressive array of national commission pronouncements, state governors' recommendations and the general search for excellence in education. Many institutions, in spite of strained financial circumstances, are studying their international educational needs, often in the context of a review of the core undergraduate curriculum.

Substantial momentum now exists toward attaining a greater international dimension in higher education. For example, a recent national initiative, the Coalition for the Advancement of Foreign Languages and International Studies (CAFLIS) consists of 160 regional and national organizations, both large and small, seeking to improve international education and enhance the nation's competence to deal with global issues. Yet, there are still some colleges and universities which have not embraced such commitments and others which have done so superficially. The Task Force encourages the faculty and students at these institutions to push hard for a more vigorous international commitment, one which includes undergraduate study abroad as a means to accomplish curricular and educational ends.

The strategy will vary among colleges and universities, faculties, departments, and disciplines. The authors of a report which canvassed a cross-section of institutions in four selected states note the following:

We were struck repeatedly by the importance of a charismatic leader in galvanizing a campus to focus on and undertake study abroad. Usually the key person is the president, but it also may be a provost, dean, state governor, system chancellor, or even some dynamic senior faculty member. Enormous resources are not required to make study abroad work; what are usually lacking where such a program does not exist are vision, a sense of commitment, and a clarion call to action.⁷

We urge persistence on the part of those who are already committed, but whose institution may be laggard. Persistence, enlisting internal and external allies, pushing for creation of a review committee and strategic planning to take advantage of opportunities and normal information flow

⁷ Goodwin and Nacht, Abroad and Beyond: Patterns in American Overseas Education, p. 60.

are all important. These endeavors must be taken with a thorough knowledge of and sensitivity to the institution's governance structure.

Even with general institutional commitment, attitudes of individual faculty and those prevailing in some departments can be a problem, sometimes even a severe obstacle to forming new programs or encouraging student participation. The explanation for lack of faculty support includes such inglorious reasons as inertia and the egocentric "what's in it for me." Less crass but equally parochial--and more prevalent--is the attitude among some faculty, even those who ought to be among the strongest proponents of study abroad, that study abroad deprives them of their best students, actually taking students out of their classrooms and reducing their full time equivalent statistics. But, by far the most frequent cause of lack of faculty interest in or opposition to study abroad programs is that they are not perceived to be relevant to or supportive of what faculty do. Faculty often do not recognize the academic legitimacy of the students' activities abroad. In support of their position, faculty members cite student reports selectively, for example, those asserting that students' experience abroad was not as rigorous academically as their experience on the campus.

One approach to winning the support of faculty is to design study abroad programs with particular faculty in mind and to begin to plan new programs with them. For example, professional school faculty who typically are suspicious of study abroad opportunities because they perceive them as detracting from pre-professional training should be asked to identify the off-campus experience that might enhance the preparation of students in his or her field. Responses that point toward greater knowledge of Japanese culture or business practices, or the implications of the European Community in 1992 for U.S. society should become the starting point for planning a new course or a program in Japan or Europe. Faculty should participate in program planning, course design, and site selection, and then help fit the program into the curriculum and form part of an advisory committee to the program. Faculty can be similarly involved in programs calling for direct enrollment in foreign institutions or the design of appropriate internships. Quite naturally they will become advocates for such study abroad experiences in their classrooms and potential future resident directors, as well as academic advisers to students returning from abroad. Most important, they will become the legitimizers of the program on campus to their more parochial colleagues, to hesitant administrators and to doubting parents.

A more interesting challenge and one that requires more imagination is to involve the faculty who teach international subjects but who have not traditionally been associated with study abroad programs, for example, a professor of international relations or security studies. Again, the key is to begin with the faculty member's professional interests and concerns. The result might be a program designed around a theme--i.e., the European Economic Community, NATO, international security in a world of declining great power competition--at a site identified by the professor where colleagues are doing quality work on the subject and where broad opportunities may exist for students' exposure to key officials and participants.

In short, faculty members must become convinced that some learning of their subject matter may well take place in a foreign setting. Not all will become convinced; nor should they, since much subject matter is indeed better taught at home. But getting them involved at a formative stage is an important step.

Curricular issues in various forms comprise a third inhibitor, and were addressed in the preceding chapter.

A fourth inhibiting factor, closely related to curricular issues, is the national problem of language deficiencies. Study abroad is an important tool for attacking this serious national deficiency. New program development in other than English, Spanish or French speaking locations is not always

easy but should be undertaken. This is especially true because the overseas study program has tended to be viewed from a traditional liberal arts viewpoint, i.e. overseas study as the domain and mainly serving the needs of Euro-centered language, literature and arts majors. Creative thinking and planning will result in broader curricular focus for study abroad and include a language and culture component.

The point is that higher education must break out of its inhibiting mold. The benefits of study abroad to other fields and situations must be seen; for example, programs in China can provide excellent learning situations for English-speaking American undergraduate students even if their introduction to the Chinese language is modest. There is much to be learned in China from English-speaking Chinese lecturers and English texts about Chinese subjects, and through an accompanying U.S. faculty member. The same is true in Japan, the Middle East and the USSR. There are also many sites outside Europe where French and Spanish language can profitably be explored in other cultural contexts, specifically those of Africa and Latin America. In general, much more can be done to structure programs which are not so dependent on language skills and the needs of language and literature programs. Faculty in architecture, history, business, government, social work, engineering and many other fields can develop sound programs for students who do not speak the local languages.

In fact, properly structured, an experience can serve to introduce students to language study.

At some universities, mainly those with little tradition of encouraging study abroad, there is a serious deficiency of support services to facilitate recruitment and flow of students. The Task Force considers this to be the fifth substantial inhibitor of faculty and student initiative. This deficiency may also extend beyond the U.S. campus to the situation abroad where facilities may be weak and support service minimal.

There should be an office available on campus to assist, advise, and encourage both faculty and students. Professional study abroad personnel should be included in any initiatives to strengthen involvement in study abroad. Such an office can provide the leadership, working with departments, to expand and diversify undergraduate study abroad. The study abroad professional can assure full consideration of options and encourage adequate coverage of language and culture studies in new programs. The absence of such a unit, and the resultant lack of attention to professional and support services, slows down growth of quality programs locally and participation of students in externally sponsored programs.

Even with adequate support services on campus, weak support arrangements in some areas abroad prevent expansion of program sites. This is particularly true in Third World locations where suitable living facilities may be in very short supply, where health problems may exist or personal security may be a concern. Obviously, there are locations which are still inaccessible to U.S. undergraduate students and may be so for some years to come. But there are many which are suitable and can become available through proper planning, cooperation among U.S. institutions and organizations and with colleagues in the foreign setting.

In some cases, reciprocity--such as interinstitutional exchanges of students--is the key. While in others, the presence of U.S. students and faculty will be seen as especially welcome. A combination of initiative and persistence will overcome the problems in many locations abroad. In some cases new investment in facilities may be needed; in others, elaboration of potential benefits in both directions and patient negotiation will be sufficient. If study abroad locations are to be diversified, such patience combined with healthy persistence will certainly be needed. Consortia and networking schemes are part of the solution to this inhibitor, and ways must be found to put them in place.

Lack of accurate and adequate information about the opportunities and realities of undergraduate study abroad opportunities can serve as another significant inhibitor. There is so much incomplete or misleading information available that those concerned with providing a good flow of accurate information on all aspects of undergraduate education abroad must be particularly alert and active. Unfortunately, there are some programs in existence which deserve criticism; but these are the great exception. They are easily offset by examples of learning experiences abroad which surpass the experience of those who study only on campus. Frequently, the value of study abroad can be seen both in the academic learning that takes place, and also in an enhanced self-confidence and sense of personal direction which serves the individual student better than, perhaps, any other single undergraduate experience.

Lack of timely, accurate information can affect the judgment of faculty at the departmental level as well as that of those in the administration of the university. Therefore, both must be targets of any information campaign. The best instigators of such campaigns are those on campus who are committed to the expansion of the international dimension, and particularly, overseas study abroad opportunities. Their allies are the similarly committed, national organizations armed with data.⁸

The study abroad support unit on campus should be the main force in spreading the good word about opportunities available. If no such office exists, it remains to others who are committed within the faculty or the administration and in national organizations to be sure that program information is widely available and that the distortions of the past are corrected.

Another target of accurate information flow must certainly be the "consumer" --the undergraduate student. Undergraduate study abroad is serious academic business and it must be portrayed that way, not as an academic holiday. Furthermore, the student who seeks information about opportunities offered by national consortia or by other universities, should have ready and adequate information. A support services office on campus should be the source for such information.

It is also important that parents as well as students, understand the plus and minus factors related to any specific program of study abroad. There are certain costs, but there are certainly overwhelming benefits in most such study situations, and these must be communicated effectively to families and supporting individuals. Outreach beyond the confines of the institution is essential. The insecurity caused by reports of terrorist activity, or a sense of hostility toward Americans abroad, can be easily overstated and parents can draw the wrong conclusion from newspaper headlines. Those concerned about accurate portrayal of the foreign situation must certainly be alert to problems, but also find ways to counter them with timely and realistic appraisals.

The seventh inhibitor is the shortage of funds for exploring and establishing new programs and for supporting some students. The chapter which follows deals directly with available options and recommends actions.

⁸ "Study, Work and Travel Abroad": A Bibliography.

CHAPTER V

Addressing Financial Options

The problems of finance should be considered from several perspectives and levels.

Institutional Issues. Fortunately, most colleges and universities allow their students who participate in study abroad programs organized by their home campus to receive financial aid. However, it is still common to find institutions which do not allow financial aid for programs sponsored by other institutions, to find private institutions where students cannot use institutional aid for study away from the home campus, or to find that only some kinds of federal aid are allowed for support of study abroad.

These situations clearly deter undergraduates from study abroad. Colleges and universities that are fully committed to undergraduate education abroad will take action to ensure that their study abroad students are entitled to and receive at least the same level of financial support abroad--federal, states or private--as at the home campus (institutional commitment is also reflected in the faculty reward system and in support services and program funding relating to study abroad).

We applaud the approach of the University of California system and some other institutions which assume that just as costs for study at UC are supported by the university, so should they be when UC students study abroad. Furthermore, the UC system funds much of the cost of hosting "reciprocity students" from partner institutions abroad in order to assure UC student access to classrooms abroad. This UC approach contrasts with that of other institutions which expect study abroad to be self-funded by students or even revenue-generating for the U.S. institutions. Where the latter viewpoint prevails, it is a painful indicator of the low priority accorded to study abroad. If study abroad is to gain more priority, colleges and universities ideally should invest institutional resources in the activity.

The wide range of financial models suggests that where there is a will, there is a way.⁹ The task may be more difficult at low tuition public universities in contrast with higher tuition institutions. But if study abroad ranks as a high enough priority, no institution for financial reasons should have to deny its undergraduate students an opportunity to study abroad for credit either in a university-managed program, or through a well-planned and managed consortium program, or independently. Any institution can design affordable programs, assure that support services are sufficient, that exploratory funding is available, and that student aid funds are usable if needed.

Government Support at State and National Levels. State and federal support for undergraduate study abroad has been limited and, when available, over-regulated. At the federal level there are several issues. Statutory and regulatory limits prevent students who study abroad from receiving aid without major delays, bureaucratic obstacles, or other disincentives. Federal aid does not normally take into account that study abroad may involve extra costs compared to study at the home campus, just as laboratory studies for the science student may require extra expenditures. Even though it is in the national interest that study abroad involve more diverse students and sites abroad, almost no public funding now is targeted to that need.

⁹ Cooper, Cressey, Stubbs, eds., Financial Aid for Study Abroad: A Manual for Advisors and Administrators.

In light of these and related circumstances, the Task Force recommends a careful review and modification of regulations, specifically:

- Existing statutory and regulatory limits which discourage or prevent undergraduate study abroad should be revised to facilitate undergraduate education in other countries and reflect sensitivity to the special needs of students participating in it;
- Federal law and regulations relating to student financial aid should ensure that the extra costs of study abroad, when applicable, are taken into account in determining students' awards;
- Federal eligibility requirements should be revised to allow more aid to study abroad students because most cannot work while studying abroad;
- Federal appropriations to institutions which do not allow students to use the aid for which they are eligible for study abroad should be restricted or made conditional on the institution's assuring the availability of this aid.

Moving beyond federally-funded financial aid regulations, at the federal level, the National Task Force has reviewed existing legislation and programs which involve or are pertinent to undergraduate education abroad in order to identify what might best advance the field. As part of this we were concerned whether at a time of budget deficits nationally, we should focus on including a larger or new undergraduate study abroad dimension within existing programs, or advocate new federal legislation and funding in support of this field. The Task Force decided to do both, as is set forth below.

- The Fulbright Student Program, almost entirely graduate, should be expanded to provide a few highly targeted awards for undergraduate study abroad, with priority to diversifying student participation, non-western destinations, and under-represented disciplines. Another important target group are graduating seniors, for whom Fulbright awards can serve to attract and facilitate a talented and more diverse study abroad pool.
- The International Student Exchange Program (ISEP) which provides an excellent study abroad model offering cost-effectiveness, reciprocity, and diversity, should be continued and expanded, especially in the developing, non-Western world.
- The Group Projects abroad program of the U.S. Department of Education which encourages international and foreign language education for current and future teachers and emphasizes sites outside of Western Europe should encourage the inclusion of undergraduates as program participants, especially the under-represented minorities.
- There are a number of provisions of the Higher Education Act, Title VI, which deserve attention, especially in the months leading up to its re-authorization in 1991. These are: (1) The Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship Program under the Department of Education (Title VI) should give more opportunities to undergraduates for study abroad, especially for study of "critical" languages and in non-Western countries (though allowable under the program, very few awards have been made for undergraduate study abroad.); (2) Title VI, Section 604, the Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program, should be revised to authorize support for study abroad, especially that which is closely related to on-campus foreign language and international studies curricula funded under this program; (3) Title VI, Section 605, authorized but not yet funded, in granting funds to higher education institutions for intensive summer language courses should include

among eligible participants advanced foreign language students as well as teachers; and (4) Title VI, Sections 612 and 613, of the Higher Education Act, in encouraging more internationalization in business studies and programs should give strong encouragement to internships abroad for undergraduates in business/foreign language fields.

- PL 480 legislation, which authorizes a percent of sales of American commodities abroad and paid for in local currency to be used towards the costs of U.S. programs abroad, should make support of undergraduate study abroad a priority.
- A variety of federally-funded programs, mostly administered by the U.S. Information Agency to support undergraduate education abroad, such as the Youth Exchange Initiative, the Bundestag Program with the Federal Republic of Germany, the Samantha Smith Program, etc. should be reassessed in order to ensure adequate participation by minority and other under-represented students.
- The University Affiliation Program of USIA should include, as a consideration in funding applications, the U.S. university's intention to make study abroad or student exchange an element in the inter-institutional relationship.

In addition to the above measures, the Task Force views as essential and urgent a new federal initiative to implement the objectives described above, including:

- Providing a substitute or work/study option for income earned while working in the United States (at present, students rarely can be approved for work abroad while studying);
- Supporting non-traditional, minority and other under-represented students to study abroad, and among them students aspiring to programs focused in the third world/developing countries.

The Coalition for Advancement of Foreign Language and International Studies (CAFLIS) has issued its Action Plan which calls for expanded study abroad and urges creation of a new entity to help orchestrate and support major improvements in international education over the next decade. As this new national initiative takes shape and funding becomes available, we urge attention to study abroad needs.

Corporate Role. Prompted by concerns for international competence, developments such as Europe 1992, and the accelerating internationalization of business and industry, the interest of U.S. corporations in promoting greater awareness among their staff of the cultures, languages, and ways of doing business of other countries has sharply increased in recent years. Even though the subsidiaries of many U.S.-based firms hire host country nationals as local managers, more and more U.S. corporations are acknowledging needs for internationally trained recruits.¹⁰

In seeking more support for undergraduate study abroad, colleges and universities should take the above trends and concerns into account and seek more assistance from the private sector. This should apply especially for programs which enable business students to become competent in other languages and knowledgeable about other cultures. Such assistance might take the form of financial contributions by U.S. firms to such programs or providing funded internships or other practical experience opportunities with their operations abroad. Such assistance should also be

¹⁰ Kobin, ed., "International Cooperation in Business Education," pps. 4-5.

sought for programs abroad for engineering undergraduates because of the rapid internationalization of this field.

Third World Debt. The huge debts which some countries now owe to banks in the United States and other developed countries must be considered a possible source of funding for new overseas study programs. The "debt-for-development" or "debt-for-environment" programs which have been studied, planned, and in a few cases, actually launched, suggest to those of us concerned with building new study programs in diverse areas that a "debt-for-study" theme would also be appropriate. In fact, the U.S. Department of Commerce issued a report on just such a possibility as part of the Department's desire to increase U.S. competitiveness, in this case through educating American students in a foreign setting.¹¹

These large debts are found in countries which offer great potential for diverse new educational programs--for example Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, and some countries of Africa. The existence of these multi-billion dollar funds are a real problem but they also pose a challenge. Can we find a way to use them for educational purposes, namely the establishment of new opportunities for U.S. students to study in these countries? And can such programs offer some benefit to other concerned parties as well? We believe that if properly designed they offer such possibilities and are clearly worth the effort.

At this time, most transfers of debt to serve development, environment or educational purposes are not being offered as gifts. The debt funds must be negotiated and purchased, presumably at a greatly discounted rate. The currency must be used in the country of origin, not converted to U.S. or other hard currency. But that is precisely where study abroad programs encounter most operating expenses, i.e. in the foreign setting, so the restriction should be manageable.

Since students pay hard currency for undergraduate study, they provide a source of funds to buy discounted debt currency. Their payments make it feasible to use debt funds to underpin study abroad programs. Of course, an outright gift of such funds to create an endowment fund locally would be better, but is probably unrealistic at the present time. Use of purchased debt funds could result in lower costs to the students, reduced debt totals, and improved educational opportunity.

Without providing detail here, we recommend that those involved in discussions of debt usage for worthwhile purposes, keep U.S. undergraduate study in mind. The Task Force has already started to discuss such possibilities with relevant persons and believes it to be feasible, and certainly, desirable.

¹¹ "Improving U.S. Competitiveness: Swapping Debt for Education."

CHAPTER VI

Towards Action

We have recommended two broad goals--significant expansion and greater diversity in education abroad programs--and three routes towards realizing them. These three are to align study abroad programs more closely with the undergraduate curriculum, to attack the identifiable, widespread inhibitors to growth and diversity, and to refine and improve the financial base for study abroad.

These five recommendations, as elaborated in this report, lend themselves to concerted, organized effort at the national, state, and institutional levels. We urge that at each level the community concerned with undergraduate study abroad work through existing organizations to move strategically on these goals. Where organizations do not exist, they must be created or the task absorbed within some other entity. We urge a direct approach to these goals as an important part of the broad effort to internationalize higher education and to produce well-educated leadership for the 21st century.

At the national level, this will mean that existing organizations concerned with education abroad must ally with others to see that it is incorporated in all initiatives to educate for global competence. Education abroad must be placed on the agendas of national association meetings, including college and university presidents, area studies and discipline-based organizations, professional education associations, and others. Included in this effort might be the entity proposed by the Coalition for Advancement of Foreign Languages and International Studies. All of these groups and organizations should, in concert and individually, seek to bring a better understanding of the importance of study abroad in a quality program of international education.

These alliances should be a part of a broader and more activist strategy to advance study abroad than has been present in the past. As the Higher Education Act moves towards reauthorization in 1991, education abroad as a component of Title VI should be prominent. It should be promoted within each of the varied strands of financial support for higher education, for example, as a part of broader minority student participation. An activist stance, one allied with other groups, will bring higher visibility for the study abroad field as its leaders increasingly work with Legislative and Executive Branch leaders on issues related to expansion and diversity goals.

At the state level, action is critical because most public institutions of higher learning derive a large share of their revenues from state governments and because private corporations frequently link their political activities and their philanthropic work to the communities in which they are located. Action at the state level by those committed to the goals of this report should focus on those organizations that comprise the political environment in which educational policy decisions are made. Obviously, this includes the official bodies that formulate educational policy for the state and establish the budgets for public institutions.

The objective must be to convince officials at the state level that study abroad is an integral and valuable part of higher education. Study abroad advocates should seek to place study abroad in all state processes such as higher education legislation, budgets or university support arrangements

that deal with international education. The report of the National Governors Association¹² should be viewed as a foundation--and justification--for bold actions.

Equally important, action should be directed at civic groups and corporations. Together these constitute the largest portion of the constituency for international education in the private sector at the state level. Without their support, it will be difficult to convince state governments to make study abroad a matter of priority in the policy process. The goal is to create a grassroots mandate for study abroad. Many corporate leaders are already on record nationally as favoring international education. The state level action plan should focus on winning the explicit support of corporate leaders for study abroad. Local corporations and civic groups can play an important role in convincing state officials and institutional administrators that study abroad is integral to our efforts to prepare the coming generation for the challenges they will confront. Fortunately, state and regional level organizations which support international education are generally well-positioned to lead these study abroad efforts.

Much of what we are recommending must become part of the action agenda at the institutional level. We urge that leaders of colleges and universities where international education, including study abroad, is not yet a priority appoint a task force to develop strategy to accomplish this goal. In pursuing the goal, academic leadership should forge alliances with appropriate interest groups and individuals within and beyond their institutions in order to maximize the effectiveness and impact of their efforts.

While there is no single model for strengthening study abroad, among the many possible strategies for action at the institutional level are the following.

- Allocate institutional funds to study abroad as a legitimate and significant instructional offering, and make it an important target for institutional fund-raising.
- Encourage and accord appropriate recognition to faculty involvement with and contributions to study abroad, including student advising, program development, and the integration of study abroad into the home campus curricula.
- Take such measures as may be required to assure that students who study abroad are not penalized with respect to financial aid, and endeavor to provide special assistance to minority and other students under-represented in study abroad so that they have equal access to it.
- Establish/strengthen a central office to develop, monitor, and coordinate international education, including study abroad, with appropriate staffing and other resources. The nature of the central office will vary, but the essential need for such leadership is increasingly apparent.

These national, state, and institutional activities and strategies fall in various ways within our five recommendations. Each of the five calls for specific actions, including the formation of political alliances, direct debate, and other tactics at each level. These actions will take different form and substance from one institution and locality to another. But we have suggested the ways they can be approached, recognizing the need to vary the pattern and strategy within our diverse system.

¹² America in Transition: The International Frontier.

Whatever the variation, those committed to internationalizing higher education and, specifically, expanding and improving study abroad, must now get on with the task. Never before has the need been so apparent, nor the opportunity greater.

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APPENDIX A

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